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TELEGRAM

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ROUTINE

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CFR REPORT, INFORM CONSULS, CINC/SHAPE FOR POLADS ONLY

E.O. 12065: GDS 8/8/85 (REYNDERS, THOMAS R.)

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1. {U} NEA - AFGHAN REGIME FACES CHALLENGE IN KABUL
{GDS 8/8/85}

{C} THE AFGHAN REGIME {DRA} FACED THE MOST SERIOUS CHALLENGE TO ITS CONTROL TO DATE DURING HEAVY FIGHTING IN KABUL AUGUST 5. IT REMAINS UNCLEAR WHETHER INTERNAL MILITARY PROBLEMS OR INSURGENT ACTIVITIES PRECIPITATED THE BATTLE AROUND KABUL'S ANCIENT BALA HISSAR FORTRESS IN WHICH THE DRA WAS FORCED TO EMPLOY TANKS AND HELICOPTER GUNSHIPS. THE DRA SUBSEQUENTLY DECLARED MARTIAL LAW AND ADVANCED THE MIDNIGHT CURFEW TO 8 P.M., ALTHOUGH BY NIGHTFALL QUIET HAD BEEN RESTORED TO THE CITY.

{U} NO AMERICANS WERE AFFECTED BY THE FIGHTING. OUR EVACUATION OF DEPENDENTS AND NON-ESSENTIAL PERSONNEL FROM KABUL WAS COMPLETED THE SAME DAY WITHOUT INCIDENT.

{C} FIGHTING IN KABUL ITSELF AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF THE SPREADING INSURGENCY IN THE AFGHAN COUNTRYSIDE IS CLEARLY OF GREAT CONCERN TO THE DRA. IF FURTHER INCIDENTS OCCUR, THE DRA'S AUTHORITY IN ITS OWN CAPITAL {IT HAS ALREADY LOST CONTROL OVER SUBSTANTIAL AREAS OF THE COUNTRYSIDE} COULD BECOME INCREASINGLY TENUOUS.

2. {U} NEA - WESTERN SAHARA SITUATION {GDS 8/8/85}

{C} MAURITANIA HAS SIGNED WHAT AMOUNTS TO A PRELIMINARY PEACE AGREEMENT WITH POLISARIO GUERRILLAS WHO HAVE CONTESTED SINCE 1975 MOROCCAN AND MAURITANIAN CONTROL OF THE FORMER SPANISH COLONY OF THE WESTERN SAHARA. UNDER THE AGREEMENT, MAURITANIA HAS AGREED TO RENOUNCE ALL TERRITORIAL CLAIMS TO THE WESTERN SAHARA.

{C} WHILE THE AGREEMENT IS NOT SPECIFIC ON TIMING, IT WILL PROBABLY SOON LEAD TO MAURITANIAN WITHDRAWAL FROM ITS PORTION OF THE WESTERN SAHARA (TIRIS EL GHARBI). MOROCCO ASSERTS THAT MAURITANIA HAS NO RIGHT UNILATERALLY TO ABROGATE ITS BILATERAL AGREEMENT WITH MOROCCO AND THAT MOROCCO IS THEREFORE JUSTIFIED IN TAKING MEASURES TO PROTECT ITS SECURITY. SUCH MEASURES MIGHT INCLUDE MOVEMENT OF ADDITIONAL MOROCCAN TROOPS INTO THE TERRITORY, ACCOMPANIED POSSIBLY BY MOROCCAN ASSERTION OF A CLAIM TO THE FORMER MAURITANIAN SECTOR. SUCH A DEVELOPMENT WOULD FURTHER COMPLICATE MOROCCO'S DIPLOMATIC POSITION AND COULD LEAD TO ADDITIONAL TENSION IN A SITUATION ALREADY SERIOUS AS A RESULT OF RECENT ATTACKS BY THE POLISARIO ON SOUTHERN MOROCCO PROPER.

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